



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON DC 20310

22 MAR 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: 2016 Election Year Guidance

1. The U.S. general election will take place on 8 November 2016, with campaigns in full swing between now and then for 34 seats in the U.S. Senate, all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, and 12 State and 2 Territorial governorships. Army commanders and leaders must understand and abide by Department of Defense (DoD) and Army policies concerning participation of Army personnel in political activities and use of Army facilities for political events.
2. The enclosed 2016 DoD Public Affairs Guidance for Political Campaigns and Elections reiterates longstanding policy that DoD personnel acting in their official capacity may not engage in activities that associate DoD with any partisan political activity, campaign, or election. It also provides guidance on visits to installations and use of facilities by candidates, support of political events by military personnel, and voter assistance. DoD personnel must pay special attention to the guidelines for social media.
3. Army Regulation (AR) 360-1 provides additional policy and procedural guidance when considering candidates' requests for the use of Army facilities or military involvement in election year activities. Senior commanders will not permit any candidate or individual representing a candidate to use installation facilities for political assemblies, meetings, fund-raising events, press conferences, or any other activity that could be construed as political in nature. This prohibition includes all Army morale, welfare, and recreation facilities whether located on or off a larger installation.
4. Members of Congress and other elected officials, including candidates for reelection, may be invited or visit Army installations to receive briefings, attend official events, and receive tours. Although official staff may accompany the Member of Congress on these visits, designated campaign staff cannot. All requests from Members of Congress to visit an installation must be reported to the Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison (OCLL). (See AR 1-20 (Legislative Liaison) for reporting requirements.). The media may be granted access to cover a candidate's official visit to an installation. Candidates who are not current Members of Congress or serving governmental officials may be given the same access to installations as any other unofficial visitor.
5. Before visiting an installation on official business, political candidates will be advised that they must refrain from making campaign or election-related statements, responding to campaign or election-related queries, or engaging in any political campaign or election activity during the visit.

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6. Requests from candidates to film or tape campaign commercials on Army installations and facilities will be denied. Additionally, senior commanders will not allow candidates or their agents to obtain imagery of military equipment (for example, ships, tanks, and aircraft) on military installations for use in political campaign or election advertisements, commercials, or literature, except for imagery of elected officials captured in connection with official business or travel. Senior commanders should immediately notify OCLL of any concerns, disputes, unresolved issues, or potential problems involving political candidates.

7. Although candidates may highlight support of the Armed Forces, nothing should be used to imply or appear to imply DoD or military personnel sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of the candidate. Along these lines, the use of Army marks, badges, or insignia in campaign materials is prohibited. The Army owns and controls all of its registered and unregistered logos, slogans, and other marks and insignia, including the U.S. Army logo; the ARMY STRONG slogan; the Department of the Army seal and emblem; all unit insignia; all Army badges; and all other Army logos, slogans, and insignia. Unauthorized use of these marks in campaign materials may lead the public to believe that the Army is affiliated with or endorses a particular party, candidate, or other political activity. If any unauthorized use of Army marks, badges, or insignia in campaign materials is brought to your attention, refer the matter to OCLL.

8. Army participation in or support of political meetings, ceremonies, or similar events—including troops, bands, and color guards—is prohibited. Requests for Army speakers at non-DoD events should be evaluated carefully to prevent participation in politically oriented programs.

9. Army leaders and commanders should ensure that military personnel and Federal civilian employees under their leadership are familiar with the laws and policies regarding their active participation in the political process. DoD Directive 1344.10 and AR 600-20, paragraph 5-3, set forth the basic guidance concerning the political activities of officers and enlisted members of the Active Army, Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve. The political activities of Federal civilian employees are governed by the revised Hatch Act amendments (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321–7326 and 5 C.F.R. Parts 733–734).

10. While Army personnel—active duty Soldiers and Civilian employees—may participate in the political process, they are subject to restrictions that prevent them from engaging in any partisan political activity while on duty or in uniform. Specifically, Army personnel may not engage in political activity while on duty. All military personnel, including National Guard and Reserve forces, are prohibited from wearing military uniforms at political campaigns and election events.

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11. DoD encourages all active duty military and Civilian personnel and their eligible Family members to register and vote. Commanders and Army leaders will support the Federal Voting Assistance Program. Commanders will provide voting assistance officers at every level of command and ensure that those officers have the necessary training and resources to provide voting assistance.

12. This memorandum is not intended to provide exclusive or complete guidance on election year political activities or to address every issue that may arise. We expect all Army commanders and leaders to exercise good judgment in handling election year issues, consistent with the Army's longstanding policy against engaging in any activities that could be interpreted as associating the Army with a particular political cause or candidate. We encourage all commanders and leaders to coordinate any potential issues with your local Staff Judge Advocate and appropriate Army Command and Headquarters, Department of the Army officials as soon as possible.



Mark A. Milley
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff



Patrick J. Murphy
Acting Secretary of the Army

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